



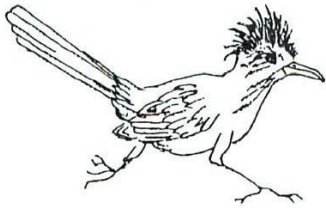
VIP2VIP



Season 2, Volume 4

Big Bend National Park's Volunteer Newsletter

March 21, 2003



Despite weather-caused schedule changes during training, the new (and some not-so-new) volunteers were able to enjoy a camping and river trip through Mariscal Canyon on February 10th and 11th. River District's volunteers Bob & Carol Huber and Steve Harper & Judy provided shuttle services and camp setup, while Steve McAllister assisted Marcos Paredes in guiding the canoes.



Persimmon Gap

Mark Kirtley- Visitor Center

Joan and Jack Lamkin- Visitor Center

Castolon

Carol Hines- Interpretation

Norma & Lloyd Burgi- Interpretation

Steve Harper- Camp Host, Backcountry, Archeology

Rio Grande Village

Gail & John Kamaras- Visitor Center

Barbara & Richard Engle- Visitor Center

Barbara and Bill Baldwin- Camp Hosts

Reta and Richard Averill- Camp Hosts

Erv and Sam Drabek- Backcountry

Basin

Ginny and Jim Herrick- Visitor Center

Bob Jacyna- Visitor Center

Dana and Les Over- Camp Hosts

Mary Kay Arthur- Camp Hosts

SCA's

Maria Lavender- PJ Interpretation

Katrina Jensen- PJ Interpretation

Casey Parks- PJ Interpretation

Adessa Schwartz- Castolon Interpretation

River District

Steve McAllister- Backcountry

Carol and Bob Huber- Backcountry

Panther Junction

Fran and Bernie Heyman- Interpretation

Wayne Strevel & Jennifer Dyer- Interpretation

Bob & Scarlett Wirt- Resource Management



February Potluck Dinner



The line for the food was well worth the wait. The table was crowded with scrumptious dishes! The evening was the perfect opportunity to spend time with both new and old friends.

The February potluck dinner was extremely well attended. It was the perfect setting to say goodbye and present the awards to the many volunteers that left in February.



Richard and Barbara Engle

For the past 5 winters the Engles have traveled and volunteered in different capacities. The first year they traveled extensively in California. In their continuing effort to remain warm, the following year found them visiting all parts of Florida. For two years they volunteered in the Oscala National Forest in Florida, where they met Sam and Erv Drabek. They worked as river rangers with Sam and Erv the first winter there, protecting Juniper Creek and Juniper Wilderness. The following winter they were backup Camp Hosts and backcountry patrol, dealing with the ATV population as new policies were being written and enforced. Thrilled to be offered the visitor center interpretation position at Big Bend this year, they are excited to be working in their first National Park.



Both Richard and Barbara grew up in Bloomington, Indiana. They met while in undergraduate school at Indiana University. Both continued on to earn masters degrees. Richard studied math and computers, while Barbara's degree is in science. This June they will have been married 41 years. Richard spent the first 18 years after graduate school working in school administration. He then



worked another 18 years teaching, with the emphasis on computers. Barbara spent her time teaching junior high school science. She taught biology and also geology, which is one reason she is an avid rockhouser. She has spent years collecting rocks and enjoys finding local specimens out in the field.

While attending Indiana University, Richard became involved with the Little 500 which is a bicycle race covering 200 laps on a 1/4 mile

track. The movie "Breaking Away" depicted this race. For 3 years Richard competed in the event. Richard said the longest day ride he completed was a grueling 80 miles around Mt Mansfield in Burlington, Vermont.

The Engles have always loved traveling and being outdoors. When their three children were small they enjoyed tent camping. Later they graduated to a pop-up tent camper, which they loved. After retiring 5 years ago they bought a travel trailer which they are currently living in during their winter travels.

Barbara's family owned a home in the mountains in Asheville, NC, that the family enjoyed as a vacation spot for years. When they retired, the decision was easily made to move there for the summer and fall. According to Richard and Barbara, fall in North Carolina is just spectacular! Traveling to warm areas in the winter, and enjoying the pleasant weather in Asheville appears to be the perfect combination for the Engles at this time.

Barbara and Richard recently closed out a crafter business. For several years the Engles, along with their employees, have sold Barbara's work at gift shows. Barbara enjoys quilting, and makes small quilts which are actually fabric art. Used as wall hangings, her fabric designs depict the various areas they have seen and enjoyed. Even though she cannot carry all her sewing machines with her in the trailer, she is still able to collect fabric and especially ideas, to use in her artistic creations once she is back home in Asheville.

When they leave Big Bend this year they plan to cut free and spend as much time as they can in the northwest. Richard has a first cousin in El Paso who has been an avid RVer for years. He is mapping a trip that will enable them to visit relatives and also travel to new areas, such as Montana. They plan to make it back to Asheville in time to enjoy the wonderful fall weather.



Volunteer Corner

Rich & Kay Gordon

Although Kay and Rich are from the East, they both love the West. Rich is originally from a small factory town in Ohio, and Kay grew up on a family farm in Shenandoah Valley, Virginia. Rich received his undergraduate degree from Bridgewater College, while Kay attended Longwood College, both schools in Virginia. After earning his masters degree in Political Science at the University of Richmond, Rich started his education career as a teacher and then in administration. Kay earned her masters degree in Educational Media at the University of Virginia. Eventually, both of them settled in Staunton, VA, working for the same school. Kay was teaching and Rich was the principal.

After their marriage 29 years ago, they tent camped cross-country for 3 weeks for their honeymoon. Neither of them had tent camped before, but they shared a desire to see the western part of the US. During that 3 week period, they got to know each other very well. They shared many wonderful experiences, such as catching fresh salmon and eating them at midnight.

After their two children were born, they continued camping and traveling cross-country. Because of these experiences, their daughter, Karen, knew from age 7, that she wanted to work for the National Park Service. She is now a park employee in Washington DC. Their son, Richard, is living in Richmond, VA.

Kay retired from teaching when the children were born, and concentrated on being a full time mom. Rich retired from teaching after 20 years, and began another career in the insurance business. This caused the family to relocate often. In 1999, they ended up outside of Allentown, PA. Knowing they didn't want to retire in that area, they decided to become full-time RVer's, an easy next step for cross country tent campers!



They have two traveling companions, Belle, their deaf dalmation, and Shadow, a cock-a-poo, they term their hearing ear dog. Knowing Belle was deaf, they adopted her at age 8 months. Kay



immediately took her to a trainer to learn how to communicate. The first lesson was to teach her to look at them for commands. The method of communication is the same as for deaf people, and Belle (and her owners) now knows 22 different signs.

In May of 2000, they started their first camp host volunteer position at Shenandoah National Park. After leaving there, they were settling in Myrtle Beach for the winter, when they received a call offering them a camp host position in the Basin at Big Bend. They were thrilled with the offer, and immediately traveled to this isolated and beautiful park. Their co-hosts were the Over's, and they all four immediately connected. After spending one more summer in Shenandoah NP, they were offered a job at Rocky Mountain NP for the summer of 2002, a job they still are waiting to enjoy.

The Over's and the Gordon's left Big Bend together last spring, slowly heading towards their summer destinations. While visiting Guadalupe NP, Kay discovered a lump in her breast. Fortunately, she was able to see a doctor, have tests run, and visit with a surgeon, all before noon in Carlsbad, NM. They were given the option of having the surgery there, or traveling closer to family. They decided on Dayton, OH, where they parked their rig in Rich's brother's backyard. The support they received from everyone during Kay's treatment was tremendous.

Kay believes that her recovery has come from faith, nutrition, and the support from the people around her. She takes a proactive approach by eating healthy and taking supplements. Both feel the experience overall was a positive one. They definitely feel that coming to Big Bend this year has been a tonic. Kay is regaining her stamina, spending time with friends, and enjoying the sun. Since both of them love to hike this is a perfect place for healing. They feel fortunate meeting all the wonderful people, while being of value to the Park Service by volunteering.

An optimist is the human personification of spring. Susan J. Bissonette

Americorps 2003

Every spring, groups of Americorps Volunteers work with Big Bend's Trail Crew for a few weeks. Their work can be back-breaking, but it is lots of fun. They work either on the trail or next to the Basin Remuda. The



first crew arrived on February 10 and will finish March 21.



Another group of volunteers will help the Trail Crew starting March 23. Because these volunteers stay long enough to learn specific skills, Don Sharlow, Trails Supervisor, says that the Americorps are his best volunteers.

We are happy to report that Norma Burgi is recovering well, and we are glad to have her smiling face back in Castolon!

Volunteer Notes

- ♦ Important Notice: Once you submit your paperwork for reimbursements, please wait 2-3 days and then see Terry Boren, in person, in the Administration Office, Mon-Fri, 8-5, to sign for your check.
- ♦ If you're planning to return next year, please remember to bring your sun hat with you!
- ♦ Be sure to check out the VIP newsletter on our website: www.nps.gov/bibe/vip.htm

Activities & Events

Book Club- "Spring Moon", Sun, March 23, 6:00 pm, Raymond Skiles' Abode, 505 Panther Canyon Drive at PJ.

Volunteer Award Banquet- Fri, March 28, 6:00 Drinks and Hors d'oeuvres; 6:30 Catered Dinner, PJ Community Room.

Benefit Dance and Raffle- To raise money for Relay For Life; Sat, March 29, 7:30-11:30, PJ Community Room, band "Wanted Alive", cover charge \$2.00, additional raffle tickets \$2.00.

Scholastic Book Fair - San Vicente School Gym, March 31 & April 1, 9am-8pm; April 2-3, 1-4pm; April 4, 9am-3:30pm.

Libby's Goodbye Party- Thurs, April 10, 6:00pm, PJ Recycling Center; dinner provided (lots of seafood), bring dessert.

Relay For Life- Join Big Bend's Relay Team to raise money for the American Cancer Society; Fri, April 25, 5pm to Sat, April 26, 9am, Alpine; Sign up at the PJ bulletin board; Call Meghan Hicks at 477-2447 or 1187 for details.

Ongoing:

Sunday Worship Service- 10:00 am at Chisos Basin Amphitheater, 5:30 pm at RGV Amphitheater, 7:30 pm at PJ Community Room.

Big Bend Community Choir- Wednesdays, 5:30 pm, Terlingua Elementary Band Room. For information call 477-2377 or 477-2442.

Yoga - Alternate Monday's, March 24th and April 7, San Vicente school gym, 6:30-7:30 pm, \$10/session

Crafts - Mon, March 24, 7:00pm, Gloria's at 203 Bobcat Loop. Every Monday in April at 7:30pm, PJ Community Room.

Check the Bulletin Board at PJ for Details and